

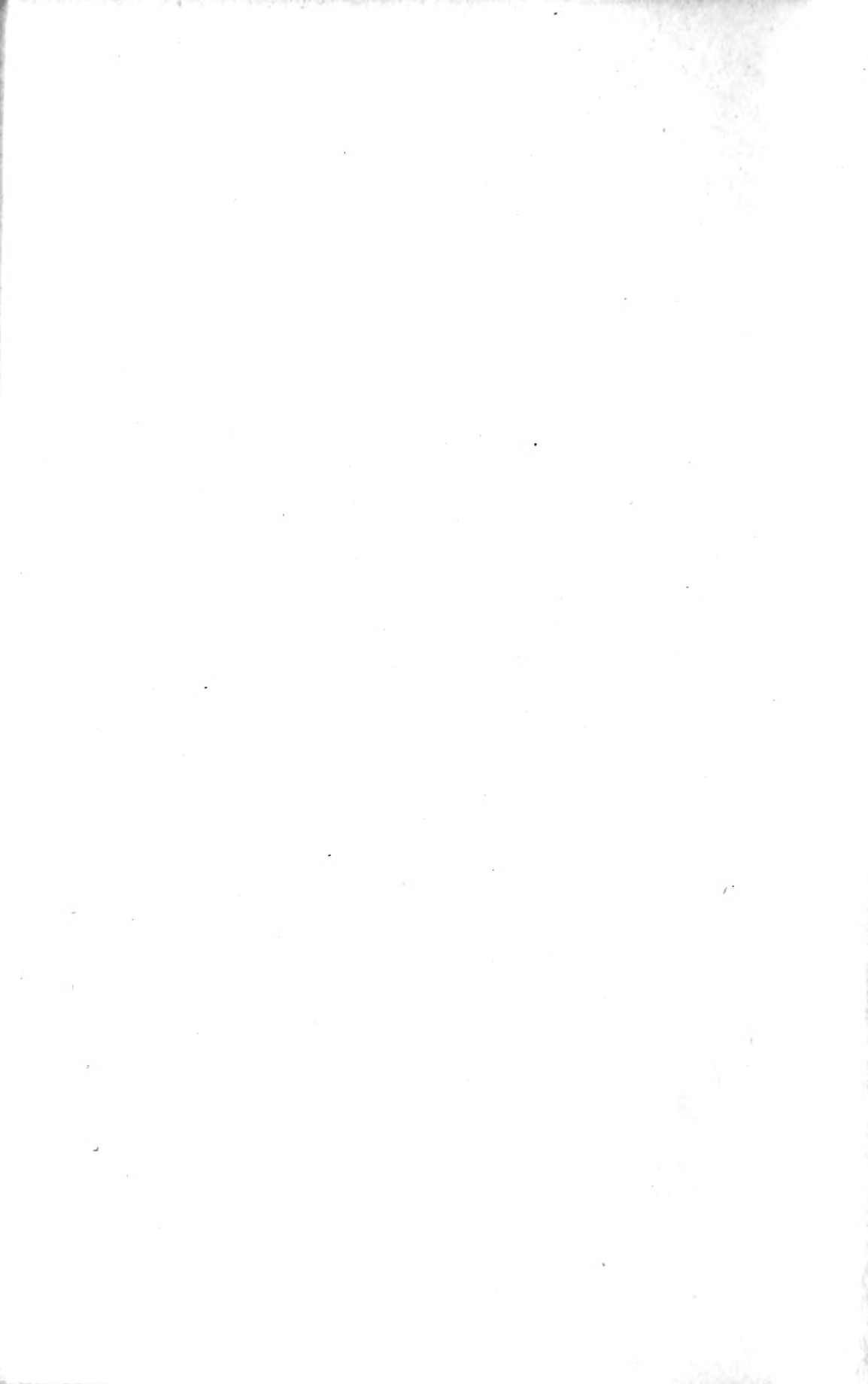
SoR
M3823kn



Martin, Matthew

Letter to the Right
Hon. Lord Pelham, on the state
of mendicity in the metropolis.

SoR
M3823kn



STATE OF MENDICITY

IN THE

METROPOLIS.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2011 with funding from
University of Toronto

SoR
M382~~5~~kn
3kn

LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT HON. LORD PELHAM,

ON THE

State of Mendicity

IN THE

METROPOLIS.

BY MATTHEW MARTIN, Esq.

To be sold by Mr. HATCHARD, 190, Piccadilly, and other Booksellers, and at the
MENDICITY ENQUIRY OFFICE, No. 8, Marsham-street, Westminster,

Printed by the Philanthropic Society,
St. George's-Fields.

Price 1s. 6d.

409927
17. 2. 43

1887

POET'S CORNER, WESTMINSTER,
3d March, 1803.

MY LORD,

I AM fearful I may have appeared remiss, in not having before submitted to your Lordship, as required, my Report on the "State of MENDICITY" in the METROPOLIS," deduced from the ENQUIRY, which, by the support of Government under the sanction of his Grace the Duke of Portland, and your Lordship, I have been enabled to make; but the complicated NATURE and EXTENT of the misery, which has been the subject of my research, and the consequent difficulties which I have encountered in my endeavours to reduce my observations to such a form, as to explain the matter with a suitable degree of perspicuity and force, may, I hope, plead my excuse.

My Report will be found to contain a brief history of the Enquiry actually made, and deductions from that enquiry; comprising some considerations on the general state of the poor; causes which reduce the

poor to BEGGARY ; an estimate of the general extent of the evil, and Proposals for a full and effectual remedy ; these I am encouraged to submit, in confidence of their being received by your Lordship with your accustomed kindness and candor.

In or about the year 1796, I commenced an enquiry into the circumstances of BEGGARS in the Metropolis ; being led to suppose, that the general obloquy passed upon this despised though numerous class of society, was in many instances unjust.

I was unwilling to admit, that the whole in a mass, were either sunk by their vices beneath our pity, or by their distresses placed beyond the possibility of relief.

In such a multitude, there must needs be found a great diversity of character, as well as different shades of misery ; and it appeared to me, that we were called upon by justice to discriminate with respect to the former ; and by charity to endeavour to remove, or at least to palliate, the latter. But various evils require various modes of treatment ; and BEGGARY considered in the aggregate, is a complication of so many, arising from, and aggravated by, a variety of causes, to such a degree of malignancy, as no simple remedy is adequate to remove.

In considering the subject, I found myself utterly unable to propose, or even to conceive a plan, which under all the disadvantages of those times, could be carried into execution, with any well grounded hopes of extensive success. But with the ideas I had formed on the subject, I was unwilling to relinquish all

hope that I might ultimately be enabled to recommend some system, which might at least gradually reduce, if not wholly eradicate the evil ; previously to the introduction of which, or of any other that could reasonably be formed, I conceived a more general enquiry into the circumstances of MENDICITY, or in other words an Analysis of the miseries attendant on the deserted poor, and an examination into the causes introductive of those miseries, to be highly if not indispensably requisite.

In an early stage of my enquiry, the “ Society for bettering the Condition, and increasing the Comforts of the Poor,” was instituted ; of which I had the honor of being nominated a member, and of proposing that my Plan for an enquiry into the circumstances of BEGGARS, should constitute one of the declared objects of that Society, which was kindly acceded to.

When about 300 paupers had attended, the undertaking becoming somewhat too arduous and expensive to be carried on without further assistance ; I was induced to solicit the support of Government.

My wishes being represented to the Society, a deputation of some of its members, of which I had the honor to be one, waited upon the Duke of Portland, to explain the nature of the design, which he was pleased to encourage, and in consequence of his Grace’s recommendation, I received a warrant for £.500 from the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty’s Treasury, to enable me to prosecute the enquiry ; and since by the favor of your Lordship, a second warrant to the same amount, an acknowledgment of which, and of lesser sums derived

from other sources, may be seen by reference to the Account annexed.

When I felt myself supported by Government, the business of course assumed an additional degree of importance ; I prepared to enlarge my plan of operation, and accordingly engaged an office and assistants. I took some time to digest my scheme, but when it was once sufficiently arranged and set in action, the execution went on rapidly.

In order to induce the paupers to attend at the office, I caused tickets to be printed, and about 6000 were disposed of to myself and others, at the price of 3d. each, for the purpose of being distributed to BEGGARS, who were admitted to the office in consequence of their shewing such tickets, and received the value, and frequently more. Thus a small fund was raised, of which the paupers had the benefit in return for their accounts of themselves ; and the tickets being lettered and numbered, and registered when disposed of, served as clues in particular cases where required, to assist the donors in tracing the history of the parties on whom they were bestowed.

The list of those who purchased these tickets is particularly respectable ; and I am highly indebted for the success of my plan, to the liberality with which they adopted and encouraged it. Liberality is an essential characteristic of the British Nation ; and is seldom or never wanting towards the support of any measure likely to contribute to an extensive relief of the poor.

In a little more than seven months, the 2000 exami-

nations recorded in the Tables, were taken; in the course of which time, above 600 other persons attended with tickets, who though paupers, did not confess themselves to be BEGGARS; and therefore in strictness were not considered as proper objects of the enquiry; and accordingly their cases were not critically noted in like manner with the cases of BEGGARS, but the value of the tickets was allowed.

The Tables are 40 in number; each containing short abstracts of 50 examinations, disposed in columns, in order to point out the leading circumstances of the history of the parties; and the Summary annexed to the Tables, recapitulates their totals, for the purpose of exhibiting a general view of the whole.

In the Office Register their personal descriptions are noted; which I thought might be of use in identifying the objects, and might possibly be of some service to the Police.

From the result of the enquiry it appears, that there are two principal classes of BEGGARS; PAROCHIAL, and NON-PAROCHIAL; each class being subject to some variations; viz.

CLASS I. PAROCHIAL.

- a. Of Home Parishes; within the Metropolis, and ten miles round.
- b. Of Distant Parishes; more than ten miles from the Metropolis.

CLASS II. NON-PAROCHIAL.

- a. Irish.
- b. Scotch.
- c. Foreign, &c.

The column of home parishes in the Summary of the 2000 cases, states 750; that of distant parishes 336; to which two descriptions, the amount of the column of uncertain parishes, being 140, may with sufficient accuracy, be severally and proportionately added; and thus the former description would be advanced to about 847. and the latter to about 379

Total PAROCHIAL about 1226
and the numbers of Irish, Scotch, and Foreign, taken as per Summary, with the addition of 3096 for the children connected with the 2000 cases, and classed accordingly, and respect being had in such classification to the 140 cases of uncertain parishes, would amount to nearly,

CLASS I. PAROCHIAL INDIVIDUALS.

- a. Of Home Parishes; inclusive of about 1384 children, about 2231
- b. Of Distant Parishes; inclusive of 489 ditto, . . . 868

Total Parochial Children, about . . . 1873—

Total Parochial Individuals, about . . . 3099

CLASS II. NON-PAROCHIAL INDIVIDUALS.

- a. Irish; inclusive of about . . . 1091 children, about 1770
- b. Scotch; inclusive of . . . 103 ditto, . . . 168
- c. Foreign; inclusive of . . . 29 ditto, . . . 59

Total Non-Parochial Children, about . . . 1223—

Total Non-Parochial Individuals, about . . . 1997

Total Children on the 2000 cases, about . . . 3096 —

Total Individuals on the 2000 cases, about . . . 5096

I am aware that several to whom tickets have been given, have never presented them at the office; and

that in some cases, the tickets have been received with hesitation; or even utterly refused.

It is not much to be wondered at, that there should be found amongst BEGGARS a disposition to oppose a plan of enquiry into their circumstances; or that many of them should prefer the more simple mode of soliciting relief, without exposing their characters to the risk of critical examination; but probably, such persons may not always be the most deserving or the most necessitous. Doubtless however, the distresses of many may be real, who yet have been deterred from applying at the office by motives of delicacy, unwilling to rank themselves with common BEGGARS, for whose examination the enquiry was instituted; and wishing rather to conceal, than to make so public an avowal of their situation.

Nor is it surprising that some of the PAROCHIAL BEGGARS should have been disappointed in their expectations. PAROCHIAL BEGGARS, of home parishes especially, were not strictly considered as proper objects for a distinct provision. The relief they generally received at the office was of course small. Letters which I directed to be sent to their parish officers were frequently unavailing; though, in some cases, attention was paid to them, and the paupers in consequence were liberally assisted.

With respect to PAROCHIAL BEGGARS OF DISTANT PARISHES in the Country, resident in London, or its neighbourhood, it was utterly out of the reach of my power to secure a general reimbursement of advances to them, however necessary, if I had made them; and to have made such advances in any proportion to their wants,

without prospect of return, would have borne too hard upon, or rather exhausted my limited funds. With considerable regret therefore, I was constrained to leave these objects nearly as I found them. It was a sorrowful circumstance, but it was unavoidable.

It may however be proper to remark, that the money confided by Government to my disposal, was not issued for the purpose of being distributed to paupers in the first instance; but to be “applied towards carrying “into effect a Plan for enquiring into the state of the “Mendicity of the Metropolis,” and my Prospectus, published towards the close of the year 1800, particularly stated that “the acquisition of information, rather “than the relief of distress,” was the primary object of the enquiry.

It is true indeed, that I hinted a design of extending occasional assistance in particular cases. Some of my friends kindly and liberally contributed towards a fund for such occasional relief, by which I have been better enabled to follow up this idea; and several, even of the PAROCHIAL BEGGARS, have been considerably benefited by it.

The money, &c. given to the BEGGARS, has far exceeded the contribution which I received; for it would have been cruel to send away so many wretched objects without some further supply than the simple value of the tickets; but I was fearful of pressing too hard upon the funds by such extraordinary supplies, and of obstructing the main design of acquiring information.

I am bound to acknowledge my great obligations to

Lieutenant Colonel Sweedland, and Henry Grimston, and H. M. Kilvington, Esquires, to whose kind assistance and very assiduous labors, I am deeply indebted for the numbers of examinations taken in so short a space of time ; which could not possibly have been effected without extraordinary assistance.

The Enquiry, as to the character of the BEGGARS, was mostly made in the first instance at the place of their residence, and in very many cases marked with a \times , a second Enquiry was made of their referees, who were frequently in creditable lines of life.

It should be recollected that in the Metropolis especially, there may be many persons to whom the care of the poor has been confided, who may be interested in branding BEGGARS with opprobrium and infamy, to palliate their own negligence ; but the result of my Enquiry is certainly much in their favor ; as may be seen by reference to the columns of " CHARACTER" in the TABLES.

In considering the cases of BEGGARS, the greatest allowance should be made for their defective or vicious education ; the temptations with which they have been assaulted ; and the difficulties to which they have been exposed. Their vices may deserve correction, but at any rate their miseries should excite pity, and engage the endeavours of their fellow creatures to trace the sources of the evil, and by amending their moral habits, to stop its progress.

The numbers of those who accepted the tickets, and the thankfulness which they commonly expressed, may be considered as proof, of BEGGARY being, in many cases, the effect of misfortune, rather than of choice ; of the want of means, rather than the want of will to maintain themselves ; and the SUMMARY annexed to the TABLES, may seem to favor the same persuasion ; for the number of men is considerably smaller than that of women ; and of single women less than the married. Men are stronger than women, have more resources, and are better able to provide for themselves than women are ; and single women are more eligible for service than married, and have usually only themselves to maintain. The greater number of widows may in some measure be accounted for, by their being frequently more advanced in life, and having in many cases children to provide for.

Finally, if it can be proved, as I think it clearly may, that even industry itself cannot in all cases oppose an effectual barrier against BEGGARY, and that *parochial* in like manner with *non-parochial* poor, are liable to fall into it ; it is manifest, that there ought to be a considerable degree of cautious discrimination in respect to these wretched objects. An Enquiry therefore, into the circumstances of BEGGARS, the causes of their distress, and their characters, should seem a necessary preliminary before judgment be passed upon them ; and it was under the impression of this idea, that the Enquiry has been commenced and carried on.

In

In taking a view of the state of MENDICITY, or BEGGARY, in the METROPOLIS, I have been necessarily led into some considerations on the general state of the poor at large. For the frequent and inevitable transitions from POVERTY to BEGGARY have so connected them, that it would be almost, if not altogether impossible to give a detailed history of either, without adverting in some degree to the other.

The distresses of the poor under the pressure of the times, have very much engaged the attention of the rich and benevolent. Much has been successfully done, and much more proposed for their relief. Many plans have been suggested, and various discussions have taken place. Some have strenuously insisted on the necessity of such an alteration in the poor laws, as would almost amount to a general repeal ; whilst others have steadfastly contended in favor of the ancient system. I incline towards a middle persuasion ; I am ready to admit generally the excellent spirit of our STATUTES, which direct employment for the industrious ; correction for the idle ; and maintenance for the aged and impotent ; but however excellent they may be in their principle, I am of opinion that they must necessarily require some modification at least to suit such a variety of changes, as the different situations of the country, and time itself, have necessarily produced ; and I deplore the defect in the execution of the poor laws, and the frequent misapplication of the funds so abundantly provided by them.

Who can read without admiration the 43d of Elizabeth, the general basis of almost all the good regulations which have been since enacted on the subject ; and

yet it is at least a matter of doubt, whether that law may not have occasioned more mischief than it has corrected ; for by its defective and partial execution, it has been converted into an incitement to idleness, and an encouragement of insolent demands ; and in consequence, industry has been neglected, an immense expense has been incurred for the support of idle vagrancy ; and age and impotence have been left to pine in misery, and even to perish ; without timely and adequate relief.

The poor collectively are the wards of the state ; and their maintenance may strictly be considered as a national concern. In pursuance of this idea, it has been suggested, that the funds raised for their support, should be consolidated into one, and derived generally from the property of the country at large ; but an attempt to raise such a provision by national means, would operate too forcibly against the established code, and the general sentiments of the country.

It may be more prudent to fall in with the usual practice ; but to consider the general mass of the poor, as comprising persons of various distinctions, with separate rights and interests, in respect to parochial settlements or otherwise ; and as I have already mentioned the intimate connexion between POVERTY and BEGGARY, so consequently, the poor considered in the aggregate, may be classed precisely in the same manner as has been before proposed, with respect to BEGGARS ; which will be found to include every description of the poor, viz.

CLASS I. PAROCHIAL.

a. Of Home Parishes ; within the Metropolis, and ten miles round.

b. Of Distant Parishes ; more than ten miles from the Metropolis.

CLASS II. NON-PAROCHIAL.

a. Irish.

b. Scotch.

c. Foreign &c.

In order to insure the success of any plan for general relief, and prevention of BEGGARY, it would be requisite to obtain the sanction of legislative authority. It is true, that the laws have already provided remedies, or palliatives, for many of the mischiefs under which they suffer ; and the “ Society for bettering the “ condition of the poor,” has in its reports, detailed a variety of modes which have been successfully put in practice by the exertions of private and respectable individuals ; but all the excellent provisions of our statutes, and all the efforts of individuals, will fall short of the desired effect, till the general management be corrected. The relief of property which would be the happy consequence, is made the direct object ; the direct and immediate object ought to be the relief of our necessitous brethren ; and the other would follow as a matter of course.

The immense and encreased amount of the rates, which have been assessed on the public, might fairly have been supposed sufficient for the relief of all the *parochial* poor in the kingdom, had they been timely

and adequately distributed ; and had due attention been paid to the spirit of the law, which directs “ correction “ for the idle, employment for the industrious, and “ maintenance for the aged and impotent” *only*.

Under the pressure of this burden, so generally and loudly complained of, it should rarely seem requisite to call for public assistance or private benevolence, to support institutions for the ease of *parishes* ; and it may be apprehended that public charities, calculated for the relief of destitute poor, have been too frequently perverted to this end.

It might appear invidious were I to enter into a minute detail of the mal-administration of parochial affairs ; upon the whole perhaps they have been as well managed as might reasonably be expected ; taking into consideration that many of those, on whom the office of overseer has devolved, have been forced into the situation, with little qualification to fill it, and with business of their own to attend to ; that (except in a very few cases) they have received no regular remuneration for their loss of time, and their trouble, in one of the most perplexing and laborious of all offices ; and that however well disposed the persons appointed might be, the system of *frequent change* must have been sufficient to preclude the possibility of the duties being regularly and constantly well performed.

Though it be confessedly the distinct province of the legislature to enact and modify the statutes, and the proper office of the Police to carry into effect such plans as under the sanction of Parliament may be approved for remedying public evils ; yet, I hope to avoid the

imputation of arrogance, in having as an individual, earnestly solicitous for the general happiness of the country, and for the redress of private suffering, endeavoured to discover the nature and extent of MENDICITY, the immediate object of my Enquiry; and to offer such suggestions as under the authority of the legislature, may be formed into a regular plan, for the general suppression of this evil.

It may appear extraordinary that the parochial poor should be found to furnish above one half of the general mass of BEGGARS in the metropolis; there are however two causes particularly affecting the parochial poor, which have doubtless contributed to reduce many of them to a state of BEGGARY; viz.

I. The practice generally prevailing in the metropolis, of refusing relief to Paupers out of the workhouse; and

II. The want of a provision by law, to direct in particular cases, adequate relief to parochial poor, not resident within the limits of their legal settlements.

But there are also other general causes, from the operation of which Paupers of all the descriptions specified, whether parochial or non-parochial, have gradually declined into a state of COMMON BEGGARY; such as the want of regular employment; voluntary idleness, or delinquency; vicious habits and debts contracted at public houses; the purchase of articles of prime necessity by retail at little shops; and it may be apprehended often deficient in weight and quantity, and of bad quality, and debts incurred in consequence; the custom of pawning their clothes; the difficulty or impossibility of

laying by a weekly sum sufficient to discharge the expense of lodging ; sickness ; and the fraudulent and oppressive conduct of others, in holding back their dues, cheating them of their property, &c.

Such are the causes which introduce BEGGARY ; the nature of the evil is too well known ; but it would moreover be particularly desirable to gain some general idea as to its extent ; both in respect to the average number of LONDON BEGGARS, and the gross amount of the sums annually extorted from the public in their importunities.

In the fourth edition of the “ Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis,” by Mr. COLQUHUN, p. xi. the number of “ COMMON BEGGARS and VAGRANTS asking alms,” is estimated at about 3000

It appears to me, that my respectable friend has greatly underrated the number. It seems improbable, though the circulation of my tickets was extensive, that more than one third (if so many) of the BEGGARS of the metropolis should have applied at the office in so short a space of time as seven months ; and especially as those tickets were principally disposed of in the west end of the town. It is also notorious that many of the professional BEGGARS, as well as others, who from a sense of shame or of guilt, wished to avoid a strict enquiry into their characters, did not present themselves at the office. I should therefore be inclined to estimate the floating mass, as generally (in winter especially) equal to 6000, which number, with the addition of children, and pro-

portioned in like manner as before in respect to the 2000 cases, would amount to about 15,288 individuals, viz.

I. PAROCHIAL INDIVIDUALS.

a. Of Home Parishes; inclusive of about 4152 children, about	6693
b. Of Distant Parishes; inclusive of 1467 ditto,	2604
<hr/>	
Total Parochial Children, about	5619
Total Parochial Individuals, about	9297

II. NON-PAROCHIAL INDIVIDUALS.

a. Irish; inclusive of about	3273 children, about	5310
b. Scotch; inclusive of	309 ditto,	504
c. Foreign; inclusive of	87 ditto,	177
<hr/>		
Total Non-Parochial Children, about	3669	
<hr/>		
Total Non-Parochial Individuals, about		5991
Total Children, about	9288	
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS, about,		15,288

And “ the gross amount of the sums annually extorted “ from the PUBLIC by their importunities” cannot be computed at a lower estimate than what is *absolutely necessary* for the *maintenance* of such a body of people, although in BEGGARY.

For 6000 grown Persons at 6d. a Day each, lodgings and clothes, inclusive	£.54,750	0	0
9288 Children, at 3d. a Day each, clothes inclusive	42,376	10	0
<hr/>			
About 15,288 Individuals, at a gross annual expense of about	£.97,126	10	0

For though it may be urged that the parishes of the metropolis have contributed towards the maintenance of BEGGARS of all descriptions, yet the parish aids have been so trifling in comparison to their wants, as to be

hardly worth noting in a general calculation, made on so low a scale. But it is highly probable that the sum so extorted may be very considerably more than what is here stated, on account of the acknowledged extravagance and gains of professional BEGGARS, which have been said to be at an average as high as three shillings or three shillings and sixpence per day.

In suggesting a plan for REMEDY, I shall not find it necessary to propose the erection of extensive and costly buildings, or other heavy charges of establishment, it being my aim instead of augmenting, considerably to reduce the expenses of the Public, on account of the Poor. But in a case of such magnitude, composed of an infinite number of lesser evils, such a regular establishment would be peculiarly necessary, as should be competent to investigate and redress the grievance.

I would therefore propose,

THAT a BOARD be instituted, to consist of a President, and four other Commissioners, for the declared purpose of prosecuting a general ENQUIRY into the cases of BEGGARS in the METROPOLIS, and directing suitable relief.

THAT the METROPOLIS be divided into five DISTRICTS, viz. into

1. South-



1. South-west or Westminster District (red); bounded to the northward by Oxford-street, Broad St. Giles' and Holborne to the City; eastward by the City; and south-eastward by the Thames.

2. North-west or Mary-le-bone District (orange); extending northward from Oxford-street, Broad St. Giles', Holborne, and the City; and bounded to the eastward by the City-road to the entrance of the City at Finsbury-place, Moorfields.

3. North-east or Whitechapel District (yellow); extending to the eastward from the City-road, and behind the City to the Thames.

4. Middle or City District (green); the City itself.

5. Southern or Surry District (purple); all on the other side the Thames; as the Borough, Lambeth, &c.

THAT each Commissioner have the charge of a separate district.

THAT provision be made by law to direct relief to be given to Parochial Paupers in the parish of their residence, to be refunded by the parish of their legal settlement, the cause of such residence being known and approved by a Magistrate.

THAT a fund be raised by contribution from the parishes of the Metropolis; in a fixed proportion of the average amount of the expense for CASUAL POOR, taken for ten years back; that the parishes be in con-

sequence of such contributions exempted from the charge of casual poor, and the whole expense for their relief, and for the support of the Institution be borne by the fund.

THAT an account be annually submitted to Parliament, of the progress of the business, and its expenditure.

The relief to Parochial Poor, should primarily be derived from, or ultimately refunded by, their parishes. PAROCHIAL BEGGARS of Home Parishes, Cl. I. a. may in the first instance be remanded to the officers of their respective parishes. And thus according to the calculation about 2541 principals, and 4152 children, or in all 6693 individuals, might speedily be disposed of, with a reduction of annual expense in alms giving, of about £.42,130 2s. 6d. according to the before-mentioned computation; and the parish officers being eased of the irregular applications of casual poor, would have more leisure, and more money, to bestow on their own.

The disposal of BEGGARS of distant parishes, Cl. I. b. would be somewhat more slow; but may gradually be provided for, though not properly by the parish officers; because it might create a jealousy in the minds of the officers in the country, to have an expense, possibly considerable, incurred at the discretion of the parish officers in town, and the burden thrown upon them. The care therefore of BEGGARS of this description, should be confided to the discretion of the Commissioners, who should be authorised to advance suitable relief to such amongst them, as should previously have obtained a written permission from a Magistrate, approving the causes and

motives for their non-residence within their own parishes; or in case they should not be able to obtain such permission, and they should obstinately persist in the practice of BEGGARY, they should be dealt with according to law.

And thus about 1137 principals, and 1467 children, or in all about 2604 individuals more, may be gradually removed, with a further annual saving of about £.17,068 6s. 3d.

TOTAL annual saving which may be effected by removal of about 3678 principals, and 5619 children, or 9297 parochial individuals, about £.59,198 8s. 9d.

By removal of Parochial BEGGARS therefore, none but the non-parochial would remain permanently chargeable to the funds of the institution; and instead of an annual expense of £.97,126 10s. 0d. the computation would be reduced to about £.37,928 1s. 3d. But this is not all; for in every plan for relief of the poor, it should constantly be kept in mind, that INDUSTRY is the appointed source (though too little adverted to) from whence they should primarily derive their maintenance.

A very considerable part of the non-parochial BEGGARS of London are Irish and Scotch; the former are frequently very turbulent and vicious; the latter more regular, sober, and industrious. Many persons of either description may be most properly sent back; and for the relief of such as should state to a Magistrate sufficient reasons for staying here, some means may possibly be devised, of deriving a supply from those countries, in

order to ease this part of His Majesty's Dominions, from a burden which is not properly its own; and this, if practicable, would be a very material saving indeed, of an average annual expense whilst in BEGGARY, of

Irish, about	£.33,520	13	9
Scotch, about	3,189	3	9
<hr/>			
Average Total, about	£.36,709	17	6

The Commissioners will not feel themselves shackled by precedent, nor restricted by the limited rules of modern practice; they will not fear to adopt on an extensive scale, the excellent spirit of the 43d of Elizabeth, by a liberal supply of raw materials, or otherwise providing employment for such as should be able to work, and encouraging their industrious perseverance. The columns of "CAPABILITY" in the Tables, may suggest an expectation of great advantage from the adoption of such a system; they may likewise serve to point out the particular modes, in which some persons of this description may be most usefully employed, so as to produce a further reduction of expense.

Amongst the employments most likely to conduce to the general advantage of the individuals, would be the making of clothes for men and women, of shoes, hats, sheeting towelling, &c. and the spinning the thread, worsted, and cotton, and weaving the cloth. The wages whether by the piece or time, should be less than the common standard, in order to save expense to the Institution, and to induce the parties to seek for or accept employment elsewhere; and their connexions with their former employers may in some cases be renewed. The office of each district might serve as a kind of Register

office for labourers and mechanics of various descriptions, and in some cases even of servants out of employ.

But it would not be merely to the reduction of expense to the public, nor to the encouragement of INDUSTRY in the parties with a view to their bodily sustenance, that the Commissioners would confine their attention; there is yet another point more essential than all the rest.

It is the interest of the state, in a political point of view, to promote the moral character of the subject; and RELIGION is the only stock on which morality can be successfully grafted.

To inculcate therefore the sacred and sublime truths of Christian revelation, and enforce the practical duties consequent on a genuine faith, is a matter of the first importance to the Nation, and to the individual; and surely a little reflection will be sufficient to evince the cruelty of such frequent execution of unhappy wretches, for the transgression of laws, which they were never properly instructed to respect. Indeed no permanent extensive advantage, can be justly expected to be derived to the poor, without inculcating in them the principles of religion and morality; and on this ground the education of youth of both sexes; and the early impressing on their minds a sense of the obligations of religion, and habituating them to industry, may be strongly recommended, as a momentous object of national concern.

It would therefore be an essential branch of duty in

the Commissioners to attend to the instruction of those under their peculiar care ; and thus to reduce the mass of BEGGARS, and check their increase ; the army and navy may be recruited from the boys ; and many of the girls be brought up for service, or other creditable situations, and saved from prostitution and infamy. Some of the elder women, even amongst the BEGGARS themselves, may be employed to instruct the young ; and by taking charge of the children by day, afford opportunities to the mothers to work for their own maintenance. The manner of conducting the schools, and their situation, would properly be subject to the direction of the Commissioners.

A supply of FOOD and FUEL on easy terms, would be another incalculable advantage to the poor, and might be effected by a comparatively inconsiderable *advance of money*, with little or no loss, even though some stated allowance by way of commission, should be made to the venders of the several articles ; who might be selected from amongst the honest and creditable characters of the poor themselves, or from the lesser shopkeepers, under the direction and control of the Commissioners ; and indeed, if it be considered that the poorer classes of people purchase the articles of common consumption at a dearer rate than others, it should seem requisite to adopt some expedient for procuring them the necessities of life on more advantageous terms.

The three points which I have more particularly adverted to, as of primary importance for the well being of the poor, are RELIGIOUS and MORAL instruction, EMPLOYMENT, and a reasonable supply of wholesome

FOOD and FUEL. These in every Christian country the poor have reason to expect; and in addition thereto, other, *subordinate* modes of relief, may be successfully called in aid; such as the providing them with decent and comfortable clothing, and lodgings; the affording them medical assistance in cases of sickness and lying-in; and the procuring for them a greater facility of obtaining legal advice, when injured in respect to their personal rights or property, by the oppression of others.

It would be the duty of the Commissioners, to apply with efficacy and economy, the funds entrusted to their management, to relieve each and every species of distress, produced from the causes which I have enumerated, or others. It being the intention that the maintenance of the objects should *primarily* be derived from their own industry, and that the *deficiency* should be supplied, to prevent BEGGARY.

When the Commissioners shall have sufficiently arranged the Plan, it may safely be recommended to the public, to desist from giving money to BEGGARS; as the tickets would be sufficient to put BEGGARS of all descriptions, in a proper train for relief. And after a time, the use even of tickets may be superseded, by the paupers being aware, that they may apply themselves, at one or other of the offices, in the first instance.

If therefore the Parochial assessments in the METROPOLIS be adjudged amply sufficient for the relief of its own poor; and if the parochial poor of distant parishes in the Country, and the non-parochial poor, the one and the other resident in London, or its immediate vicinity, be subject to the direction and control of the

Commissioners, what would be the description of persons who should remain in the practice of BEGGARY, or what plea would they have to offer in apology for their conduct?

We may reasonably hope, that the adoption of such a system would meet with general countenance; and that in proportion as public confidence should encrease, the pernicious practice of indiscriminate alms-giving would gradually decline; and the whole CRAFT OF STREET BEGGARY in the METROPOLIS BE ABOLISHED.

But, besides STREET BEGGARS, there are numerous persons, of superior order in BEGGARY, who are frequently very importunate, and very expensive, to charitable individuals, such as BEGGARS

BY PETITION,

OR BY LETTER;

and APPLICANTS in person at the doors of private houses; these may likewise require some separate attention.

I am however too well acquainted with the acute sufferings of BEGGARS, whether parochial, or non-parochial, and the great difficulties and hardships which they encounter, to recommend rashly a sudden withholding of alms. Such a measure might hazard the lives of hundreds. On the contrary therefore, I would rather enforce the necessity of giving, and of giving more generally, and more abundantly, even in doubtful cases, till a better system be established. But should such an event happily take place, the BEGGARS by PETITION and LETTERS, in like manner with others, may

be referred for examination, in order that more ample testimony may be obtained, as to the grounds, whether true or false, on which they have been accustomed to urge their pleas.

It might not be possible, nor even desirable, to put an effectual stop to private applications ; but if the trade of BEGGARY should happily be suppressed, and the means of ENQUIRY made easy, the charitable and humane might be assisted “ in a more satisfactory distribution of their alms,” towards encreasing the comforts and ameliorating the condition of the industrious poor, rather than in the temporary and inadequate palliation of misery, or the encouragement of idle, *professional* impostors.

Thus, my Lord, I hope I shall appear to your Lordship, to have fully discharged what I had pledged myself to do ; having effected my Enquiry on a larger scale, than I believe was ever before attempted in this Country, and consequently gained a better foundation for my Plan, than perhaps was ever before acquired.

It is not possible to form a determinate idea of a fluctuating body, either as to its general magnitude, or the proportions of its component parts ; but whether my estimate of the general average of the evil, or the relative numbers of the particular descriptions of BEGGARS, parochial or non-parochial, which it comprises, be greater or less than the truth ; the operation of my Plan, would in either case be still found effectual, not merely to palliate, but to strike at the root of this pernicious evil ; and by obviating the causes introduc-

tive of BEGGARY, and relieving those numerous and diversified species of individual suffering, of which the general mass is composed; have a tendency at the same time to diminish the public expense, and increase the sum of national happiness and prosperity.

It remains for me to request, that your Lordship will take the subject into your serious consideration, and honor it with such countenance and support as its importance, rather than the manner in which I have discussed it, may seem to require.

I have the honor to be,

With great respect,

MY LORD,

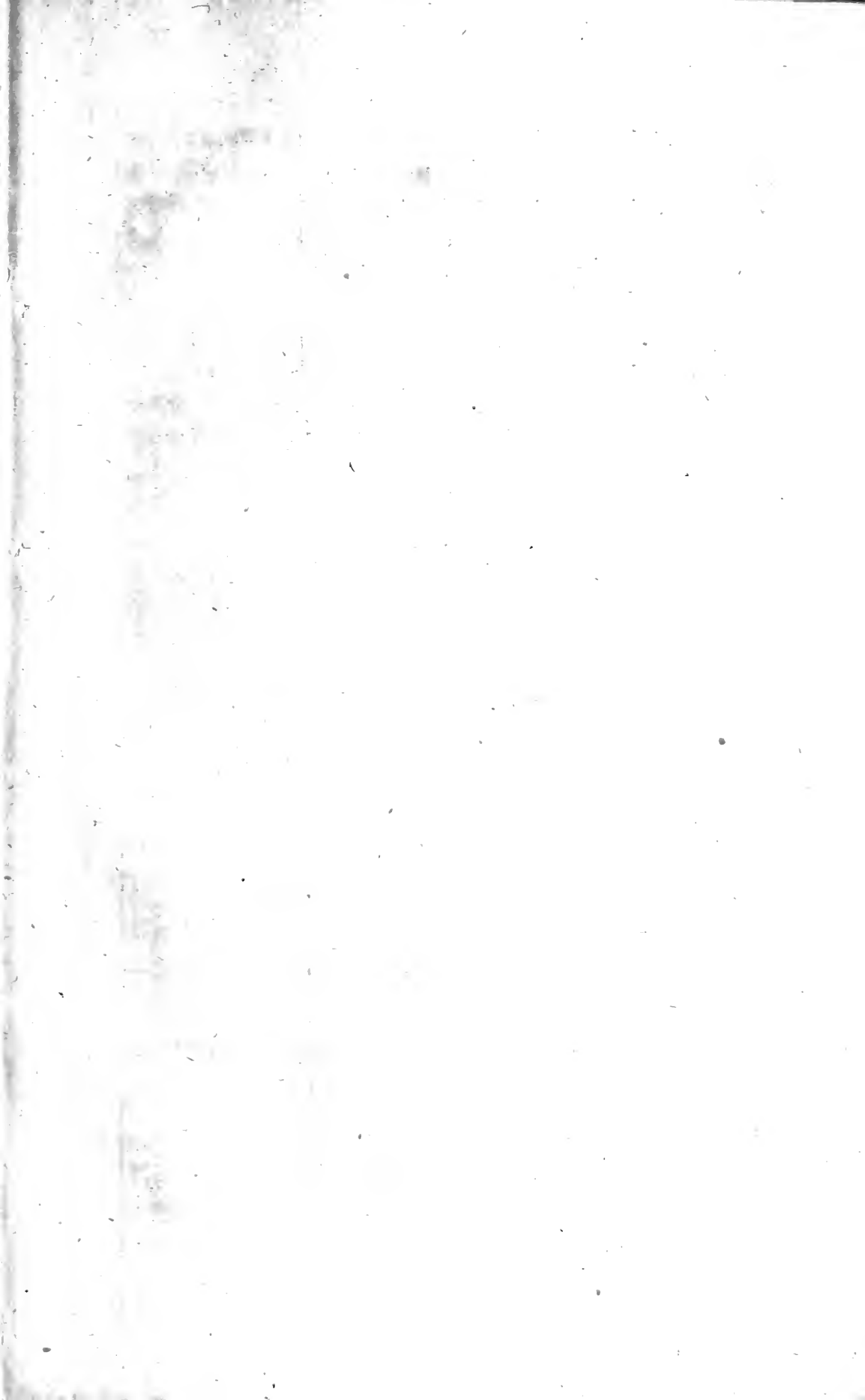
Your Lordship's

Most obliged, and obedient

Humble servant,

MATTHEW MARTIN.

RIGHT HONORABLE LORD PELHAM,
&c. &c. &c.



MATTHEW MARTIN in Account with the BRITISH GOVERNMENT for carrying on a PLAN for enquiring into the STATE of MENDICITY in the METROPOLIS.

Dr.

Cr.

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
To Warrant from the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury	500	0	0	By Exchequer and Treasury Fees	33	17	3
To Ditto	500	0	0	By Ditto	33	17	3
To extra Contributions from Friends, &c.	60	0	0	By House-rent, Taxes, &c. to Sept. 29, 1802	93	17	0
To Cash received for 7180 Tickets, sold at 3d. each	89	15	0	By Salary to Housekeeper, from Sept. 29, 1800, to Dec. 31, 1802, inclusive	9	0	0
				By Coals, Candles, &c.	61	2	9
				By Furniture, &c.	9	0	7
				By Carpenters Work for Repairs, &c.	3	14	11
				By Bricklayers Ditto	3	4	3
				By Painters Ditto	2	17	2
				By Clerks, from June 30, 1800, to Dec. 31, 1802, inclusive	438	4	2
				By Enquirers, from Jan. 15, 1801, to Oct. 9, 1802, inclusive	108	0	3
				By Stationery, Printing, &c.	96	5	9
				By Tracts	2	2	0
				By Coach and Cart-hire and Postage	1	10	11
				By Sundries	2	2	4
				By Spinning-wheels, &c.	3	0	2
				By Hemp and Flax, &c.	11	6	8
				By Spinning	7	2	8
				By Herrings, Potatoes, Rice, &c. furnished for the Use of the Poor, with Carriage and Commission and inclusive of Loss, &c.	64	18	3
				By paid PAUPERS for their Tickets	57	0	0
				By GAVE Ditto as occasional Relief	135	3	0
				By GAVE Ditto for Pensions and Arrears of Lodgings	308	2	10
				By Apothecary for Medicines for the Sick	11	15	1
MENDICITY ENQUIRY, Dr. to MATTHEW MARTIN, Dec. 31, 1802	347	10	3		576	19	2
	£.	1497	5	3		£.	1497

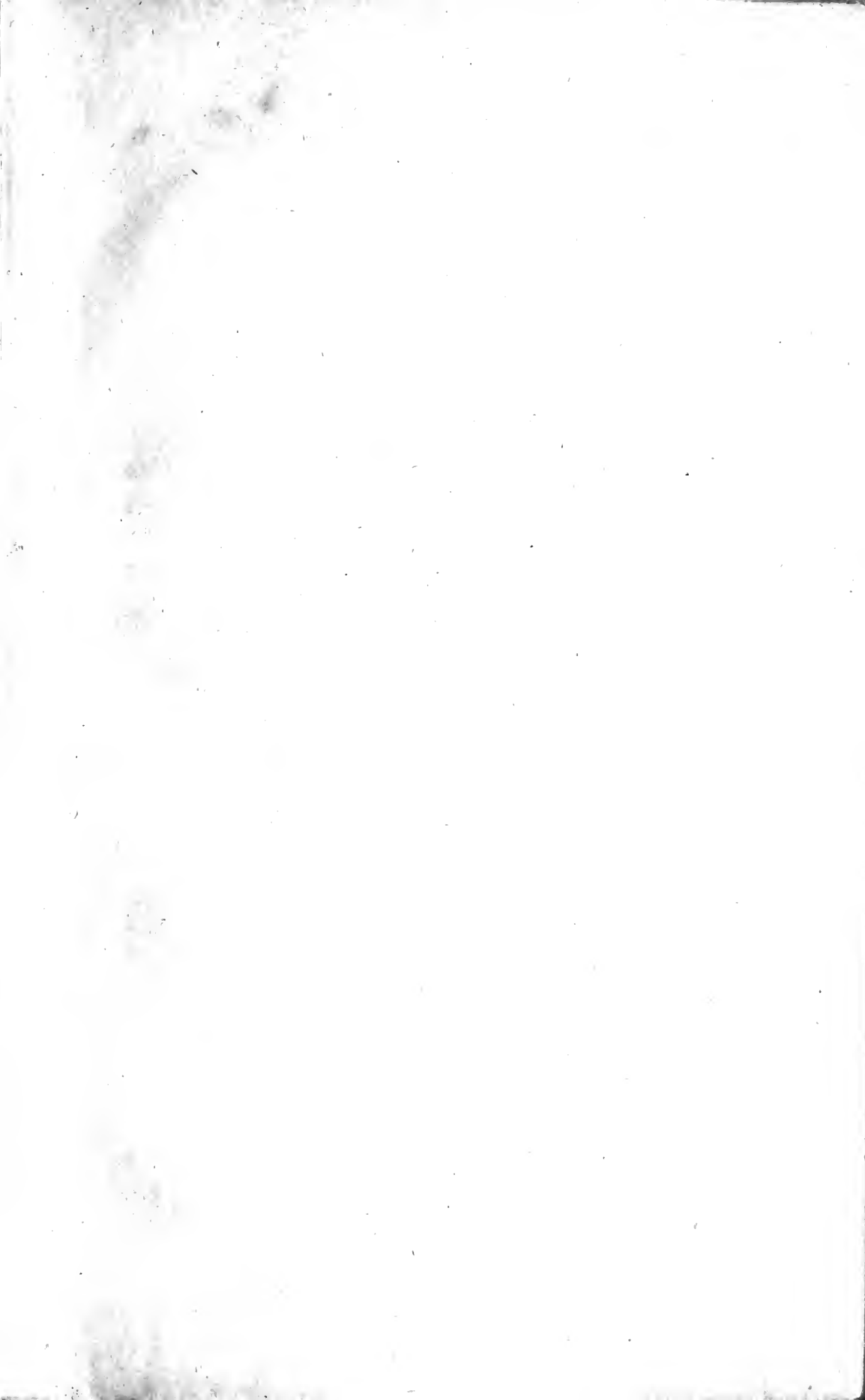
SUMMARY OF 2000 CASES OF PAUPERS,

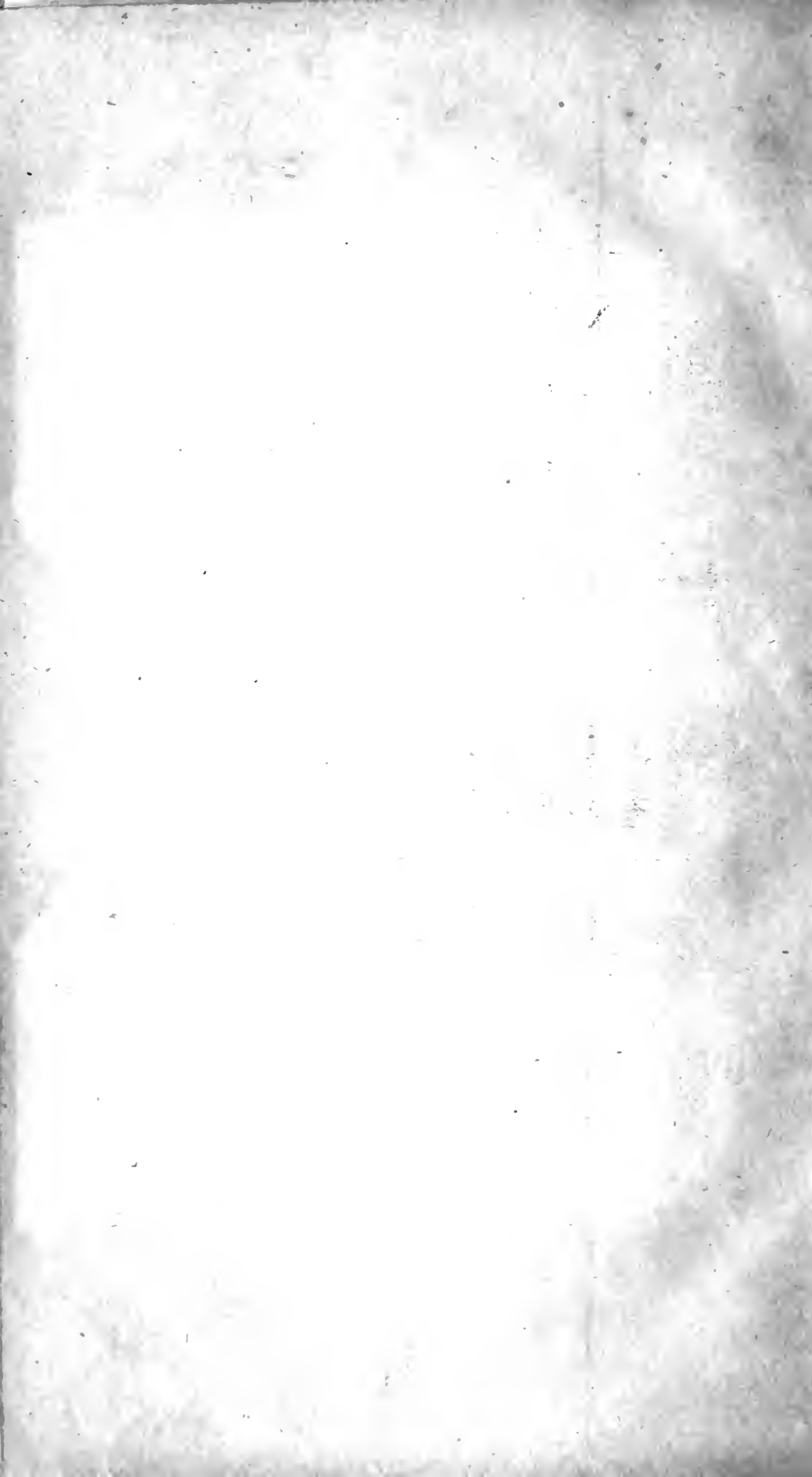
EXAMINED AT THE

Plendicity Enquiry Office.

[illegible]







400087

Martin, M. L. C.

Letter to the Hon. Lord R. B. M., on the
state of merit in the Metropolis.

University of Toronto Library

**DO NOT
REMOVE
THE
CARD
FROM
THIS
POCKET**

Acme Library Card Pocket
LOWE-MARTIN CO. LIMITED

UTL AT DOWNSVIEW



D RANGE BAY SHLF POS ITEM C
39 11 13 01 09 017 1